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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 5581
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PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS

¶1. LEAD STORIES: Top items on Thursday morning included a proposal made by a Justice Ministry panel to lower the age of majority to 18 from the current age of 20 on the condition that the voting age for national elections is also lowered to 18.

¶2. "Cooperation Necessary to Ensure Peace" The liberal Mainichi editorialized (7/30): "The strategic and economic dialogue (SED) left the impression of a shift in power dynamics, with China asking questions about U.S. economic management and the U.S. seeking China's understanding - a departure from the previous paradigm in which the U.S. primarily made requests.... The red carpet treatment [offered to the Chinese delegation] by the Obama administration revealed the difficult position of the U.S. being unable to maintain its international influence without Chinese cooperation.... The meeting has been viewed as the start of a 'G2' system. However, it's not as if the U.S. and China are thinking about running the world on their own. That would be impossible. Deep-rooted distrust remains between them in terms of security and other areas. That is why the strategic dialogue was held."

¶2. "'G2' in New Era" The business-oriented Nikkei insisted in an editorial (7/30): "While agreeing to the launch of governmental dialogue on the issue of global warming, the U.S. and China stopped short of coming up with specific measures on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases, the two nations hold the key to the creation of a post Kyoto Protocol framework. They are expected to start the dialogue promptly based on a strong sense of responsibility for the future of mankind."

¶3. "Turning Point in History" The liberal Asahi asserted (7/30): "Many people may have probably felt, following the SED, that U.S.-China relations are experiencing a historic shift since their diplomatic normalization 30 years ago.... There are no guarantees that this calm period in U.S.-Japan relations will last forever."

Still, it can be said that a system has now been established for dealing with pending issues diplomatically."

¶4. "U.S. Prioritizes Common Interests" The liberal Asahi wrote from Washington (7/30): "President Obama's statement that the U.S. and China will shape the 21st century left the impression of a gradual arrival of the era of the 'G2,' in which the U.S. and China will determine the course of major issues. However, the USG is cautious about such a 'G2' system being regarded as an exclusive alliance out of concern that such a mechanism might restrict coordination with such traditional allies as European countries and Japan."

ZUMWALT